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NSC STAFF FOR SINGH

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SUBJECT: AYMAN NOUR UPDATE

Classified by DCM Stuart Jones for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Poloff met July 5 with Gameela Ismail, wife of imprisoned Ghad Party leader Ayman Nour, and Amir Salem, Nour's long-time lawyer. Ismail stated she had visited Nour on July 1, and that, "his health and spirits are low." Nour, suffering from a toe infection that required surgery, requested medical treatment from the Office of the Public Prosecutor. Surgery was scheduled, but the doctors ultimately refused to operate, because they had not received the "appropriate instructions," she said. According to Ismail, no subsequent medical treatment was provided, so Nour undertook the surgery himself. Ismail commented that Nour continues to suffer from diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart problems. She noted that, "he is now under observation 24 hours a day ... he can't even use the bathroom without an observer present." Prison guards told her that the procedures governing Nour's treatment are even stricter than that for Sadat's assassins.

¶2. (C) Ismail noted that MP Talaat Sadat filed a petition three weeks ago with the Presidential Palace, signed by 109 MP's (mainly independents and members of the Muslim Brotherhood), requesting that President Mubarak grant Nour amnesty under Article 149 of the Constitution (Note: Article 149 reads, &The President of the Republic shall have the right of granting amnesty or commuting a sentence. General Amnesty can only be granted by virtue of a law8. End note). There has been no response as yet from the Presidential Palace, so Ismail has been regularly meeting with MP's to urge them to sign the petition. She reported that many NDP MP's, while "sympathetic", are "too frightened" to sign their names to the petition. Salem urged the USG to press the GOE, and specifically Mubarak, to release Nour under Article 149.

¶3. (C) Poloff invited Ismail to meet with the Ambassador; while noting she was &honored8 by the invitation, she declined, saying that, based on her husband's advice, she would prefer to keep in touch with the Embassy via a lower-profile channel for the time being. Embassy will continue to meet regularly with Ismail, as well as file formal requests with the GOE to visit Nour in prison (thus far, all such requests have been denied).

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